

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

August 1, 1996

The Honorable John McCain  
Chairman, United States Senate  
Committee on Indian Affairs  
Washington, DC 20510-6450

Dear Senator McCain:

I am writing in response to your letter of July 19, 1996, requesting information regarding the White House's alleged intervention in a dispute between Indian tribes over off-reservation Indian gaming in Hudson, Wisconsin. I appreciate the opportunity to clarify any misperceptions which may have resulted from the recent *Wall Street Journal* article on this subject.

Contrary to the representations made in the *Journal* article, the decision not to take the Hudson land into trust for the purpose of Indian gaming was, as far as I know, made independently by the Interior Department, based solely upon the potential negative impact on the surrounding community. There was no effort by the White House to influence this decision in any way.

The White House's involvement in this matter, as alluded to in the *Journal* article, was limited to routine status inquiries to the Department by a member of my staff. While it is possible that I spoke to Democratic National Committee Chairman Donald Fowler about this issue, I have no specific recollection of such a conversation. Further, I do not recall receiving a memorandum from Mr. Fowler on this matter, nor can I find any such memorandum in my files.

I did place two phone calls to Mr. Patrick O'Connor on this subject, which, to the best of my recollection, were made in response to calls he initially placed to me. I have no recollection of discussing this matter with either the President or Bruce Lindsey, and I doubt that I did. I later received a memorandum from Mr. O'Connor explaining why he thought the Administration should support his clients' position. To my knowledge, this information was not conveyed to the Interior Department.

As a public official, I am certain you can understand how impossible it is to control the content of materials sent to you. Further, while Mr. O'Connor's representations to his clients about the decision-making process were indeed regrettable, I was completely unaware of them and unable to control them in any event.

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